

FACULTY SENATE Minutes
February 8, 2023

Present: Henri Akono, Elizabeth Armstrong, Susan Bennett-Armistead, Emmanuel Boss, Debbie Bouchard, Tim Bowden, Ian Bricknell, Alice Bruce, Stephanie Burnett, Sabrina DeTurk, Paula Drewniansy, Phil Dunn, Nuri Emanetoglu, Allie Gardner, Michael Grillo, Giovanna Guidoboni, Nancy Hall, Matt Hawkyard, Liliana Herakova, Stephen Jurich, Jesse Kaye-Schiess, Andre Khalil, Amanda Klemmer, Eric Landis, Sara Lello, Sarah Lindahl, Margo Lukens, Ivan Manev, Eric Martin, Derek Michaud, Norm O'Reilly, Elizabeth Payne, Brian Pitman, Deborah Rogers, Amber Roth, Michael Scott, MJ Sedlock, Kathryn Slott, Rosemary Smith, Sean Smith, David Townsend, Tim Waring, Manuel Woersdoerfer, Todd Zoroya, Joan Ferrini-Mundy, John Volin, Kody Varahramyan, Robert Dana, Emily Haddad, Kate Kemper, Jen Bonnet, Kelly Sparks

Absent: Catharine Biddle, Carla Billitteri, Kristina Cammen, Ana Chatenever, Mauricio Da Cunha, Mark Haggerty, Cynthia Isenhour, Steven Kimball, Anil Raj Kizha, Danielle Levesque, Jessica Lewis, Dmitri Markovitch, Shannon McCoy, Renae Moran, William Nichols, Harlan Onsrud, Bob Rice, Peter Van Walsum, Matthew Wallhead

I. Welcome, Announcements, Approval of Minutes

The meeting is called to order at 3:15 PM. MJ Sedlock opens the meeting by turning to Provost John Volin. He introduces two new associate provosts, the first being Gabe Paquette from the University of Oregon. During his time at Oregon, he worked closely with their Faculty Senate and helped with a task force related to service and how it is measured, counted and reviewed. The other new associate provost is T. Scott Marzilli, who comes from the University of Houston-Downtown where he served as the special assistant to the president for student success. Provost Volin again welcomes Gabe and Scott. The new dean of Engineering Giovanna Guidoboni also introduces herself to the Senate. She comes from the University of Missouri and has a background in engineering, computer science and math. She is happy to join and work with UMaine and move the college forward.

Minutes from December 14th, 2022: **APPROVED**

II. Announcements and Updates from Administration

President Ferrini-Mundy provided an update on the Maine Day task force, noting that the group has done outstanding work so far; Jeff Hecker is chairing the task force. The group has decided to bring the focus back to service and safety and as a result, the task force decided to expand the event by organizing a Maine Day week and spreading the activities over several days. The planning will also include input from others as well as open the task force to those who wish to

join. It is expected that classes will be held on the Wednesday of Maine Day week. This year will be a transition period as the event moves into this new format.

Provost John Volin gives an update on the UMS Transform Student Success and Retention initiative. He announced that a workshop would be held on March 2 to discuss the initiative, and a request for proposals (RFP) for pathways and careers would be released at the end of March. Volin noted that there has already been a huge amount of feedback received from Orono and Machias, and that there is good funding associated with the initiative, which comes from the Maine Jobs and Recovery Plan. He also stated that more would be happening shortly.

Volin then discussed the Gateway to Success projects, which have been released across all seven universities. The project allowed over 20 courses that have high DFWL (Dropped, Failed, Withdrawn, or Low Grade) rates to vote, about 6000 seats, with 3000 seats participating starting this fall. Strategic enrollment, management and retention planning has been in the works for some time and is expected to be released in the next few weeks. It is a living document that has incorporated lots of input from already 25-30 people and will include already ongoing initiatives. The plan is aimed at improving enrollment, as applications are on par with last year, which saw record numbers, but the yield rate is down. To address this, the university is in the midst of a big yield campaign, with deans getting involved and over 50 enhanced accepted student events organized, many of which are out of state. Additionally, there will be three very large accepted student days on Saturdays, with one in March and two in April.

III. Update on Advocacy for Expansion of Campus Childcare

Amanda Klemmer opened discussion about the need to expand child care initiatives on campus. She is working with Kimberly Dodge-Cummings and Ryan Ward on an earmark proposal that is for \$8 million for a new children's center building that would bring all the current complexes into one building and make more seats available. This proposal has been passed to the upper administration for consideration.

Kelly Sparks expressed her personal support for the proposal and hopes that it can come to fruition, expanding the number of seats and offering opportunities for faculty, staff, and the community to bring about expansion. She emphasized the importance of getting traction towards this goal.

Alice Bruce asked what kind of expansion was being projected, and Amanda Klemmer responded by stating that the proposal for the \$8 million new building would increase current enrollment from 78 to 178, which would be large enough to meet the demand for the campus and wider community.

President Ferrini-Mundy added that the success of the earmark for the child care center at UMaine Farmington was due to the strong argument that can be made about preparation of workforce and early childhood and child care workers. She noted that it was important to work that into the proposal. Amanda Klemmer agrees and brings up the importance of such a center being helpful to the local community especially as it is an area with one of the largest regional hospitals and a community that relies on services from Northern Light.

Allie Gardner asks how the earmark works. Does it provide a one-time expense for the construction of the facility? Also what will happen with maintenance and staffing in the long term?

President Ferrini-Mundy says that the earmark is basically for the construction and development of the facility and that there is a possibility to add something about the development of the programs at the facility.

There is a question of if the new facility will be located in the place of the current center due to existing concerns of the location of the current childcare center.

Amanda Klemmer answers she is not sure where the proposal is located but that Kimberly Dodge-Cummings and Ryan Ward, who have had more conversations about this before Amanda's involvement, would know more and that she can get in touch with them about that.

MJ Sedlock adds that this is a preliminary thing and that if the earmark did come through that there are more conversations to be had about this and iron out the details.

IV. Update From the General Education Stewardship Committee

Allie Gardner is giving an update on behalf of Sam Hanes, the leader of the General Education Stewardship Committee. The committee has been meeting twice a month throughout the

academic year to work on issues related to Gen Eds. They have been interacting with the Academic Affairs Committee to develop recommendations that can be turned into motions. The committee has many goals, which range from short to medium term.

One of the major goals is to draft a description of Gen Eds that is more comprehensive than what is currently available. This project is in progress, and there are some Gen-Ed requirements that may be eliminated based on survey results. These include Gen-Ed requirements related to human values, social contexts, and some math and science courses.

In the short term, the committee aims to develop a new Gen-Ed requirement related to experiential learning. They also plan to redefine Gen-Ed categories and explore pathways for the future. The committee has received a lot of support, and their recent meeting focused on Gen-Ed requirements related to experiential learning. This requires a lot of definition, and the committee is still in the preliminary stages of this process.

One of the key issues is how to fit in Gen-Ed requirements alongside major requirements. The committee recognizes the need for a better understanding of how Gen-Ed requirements impact different programs. Another issue is the need to reduce the number of Gen-Ed designated classes. Currently, there are over 900 courses that are designated as Gen-Ed requirements, but the vast majority are not taken for Gen-Ed credit. Instead, they are primarily taken by majors that don't need them or are courses that are not popular.

This has made Gen-Ed assessment difficult and laborious, and there was a motion at the end of the last academic year to pause the assessment of Gen-Ed requirements. The committee is now thinking about how to revise the Gen-Ed assessment process, and they are in the process of reducing the number of Gen-Ed requirements and designating courses in general. The goal is to put the assessment process in the hands of faculty rather than a sub-committee.

There is a wide range of considerations around this, ranging from affecting part-time faculty and fitting into their contracts to the mechanics of the assessment process and the learning outcomes that will be used. These issues are under discussion.

Michael Scott raises the question of the financial implications and impact on departments of the proposed changes to Gen Eds. In response, Provost Volin acknowledges the complexity of the

issue and mentions that Deb Allen is working on analyzing the downstream effects. However, it's hard to provide specific details at this point in time. MJ asks if the committee has a specific timeline and if there's a plan to present the changes to the Senate in the future. Allie Gardner responds that committee leader Sam Hanes has a timeline in mind.

Tim Waring brings up his discussions with Sam Hanes and the different vision options and models that were presented about what can be done with Gen Eds and that he was excited by those. He asks if part of what is being relayed is that those are no longer part of the focus so much as the assessment and the people who are teaching.

Allie says there is interest in another Gen-Ed model to create a cohesive experience and that there was a lot of interest in that in their surveys. She says Sam Hanes is interested in continuing that, and that it is considered a medium term objective. Reason being that, in the short term that would be a lot to clean up. They felt cleaning up the wildcard HBSC would be easier to go with as a first objective and a kind of necessary prerequisite before doing some of the larger objectives. This is considered a medium to long term goal and not for the current academic year.

V. New Process for Implementation of Printing Services Changes

Tom Drake from printing services was expected to be present for today's Faculty Senate meeting to discuss printing services changes but was unable to make it. This issue will be postponed until the elected Faculty Senate meeting on February 27th.

VI. Faculty Involvement in FY24 Budget Planning

MJ Sedlock prefaces this discussion, stating the Executive Committee talked about this topic briefly on Monday with the administration and will be talked about more during their next meeting on Friday. She wants to get what is known out to the senate and offer opportunity for questions and input. MJ turns the discussion over to Kelly Sparks.

Kelly started her talk by emphasizing the University of Maine's solid foundations and the significant growth that has occurred in new programs and research. As the budget cycle approaches, she raised two significant questions: how to support growth and how to solve long-term structural deficits at UMaine. To gather input, Kelly asked all cabinet members, deans,

and directors to submit new bottoms-up budgets that detail what is needed for their work. Kelly plans to zoom with deans to add onto faculty engagement, and she will be heading to Machias to meet with their faculty leaders and some other teams tomorrow. She proposes a multi-layered approach to faculty input, and from an overall financial perspective, she leveraged 15 million dollars in reserves to close the budget gap. However, the gap won't be fully balanced in one year, and it will require a 2-3 year plan. The proposal will undergo two rounds of submitting closed plans before the budget submittal. The first reading will be in March, the second in April with a committee, and two additional sessions will be held to refine the budget's details. Kelly proposes to hold two broad listening sessions focused on identifying opportunities for growth and revenue generation, as well as opportunities for efficiency and consolidation in allocating resources.

MJ comments that she plans to find how the FIPSE meetings with Kelly Sparks line up with Senate meetings. Additionally, the regular FIPSE and committee report would become a larger agenda item for FIPSE to report out at meetings aligned following their major meetings with Kelly about the budget. This mechanism would allow conversations happening in committee to be brought back to the full group for discussion. The information gathered could then be taken back to the next meeting with Kelly. The exact timing is still being worked out but a framework is starting to take place.

President Ferrini-Mundy emphasized that the effort to improve the university's financial situation is a community effort. She stated that it will require the community to be strategic and creative, and to look back at old ideas from earlier in the pandemic. The forum that was outlined by MJ will be the platform for people to bring forward their ideas. President Ferrini-Mundy stated that ideas are crucial for the development of strategy to bring in revenue in new ways. She urged the community to think about students in new ways and to try and find efficiencies and do things in new ways to try and bring revenue for UMaine. She also expressed eagerness to have faculty and community engagement on how to structure this process. She highlighted that this process will be happening in parallel with the legislature's examination of the university's budget, which makes it a bit of a moving target.

Sean Smith asks about big ideas that were discussed several months ago, specifically mentioning the postdoc program idea that was presented by the Research and Scholarship Committee. They also mentioned that faculty feedback is being sought in order to find efficiencies and determine what needs to be prioritized. Additionally, there were concerns prior to the pandemic about

capacities in the labs and the need for more research experiences for students. The postdoc program was proposed to address these concerns and provide more capacity, while also being part of the high five initiative and contributing to the R1 pursue goal. Sean also mentions that the comments made during the meeting have been transformed into proposals and asks if this is part of the process, indicating that there may already be some ideas and proposals in development.

President Ferrini-Mundy acknowledges that they are already examining ideas from that call. Ferrini-Mundy reminds everyone that although there are detailed presentations by various groups, that those ideas will need to be systematically folded in. She expresses that she is a fan of postdocs in general because they help with R1s.

Eric Landis asks about a possible time frame for big ideas in the sense that some big ideas require a lot of upfront funding with a better long term payoff, also asking if this idea could be part of the mix?

Ferrini-Mundy says she thinks it can be part of the mix. She talks about the need to correct the structural deficit that they are currently managing, but notes that it cannot be done in a year due to inflation and other reasons. Kelly Sparks agrees that they need to grow out of this situation while also looking for efficiencies and reallocation of resources, rather than simply investing more money. In the short term, it will be important to focus on efficiency to work towards an ongoing sustainable budget, and all ideas for achieving this should be cataloged as a starting place. These ideas will become increasingly important as they work towards a sustainable budget, although some ideas may not be applicable in every situation.

Emmanuel Boss comments that the university system's population is 23,000 students, which is a smaller number compared to other states that have a single campus with a single president and cabinet. The current system is top-heavy, and he asks if there may be structural changes due to the system maintaining multiple campuses that are small but local.

President Ferrini-Mundy agrees that some regions have pride in keeping their campuses open, and the strategic planning process for the whole system includes faculty engagement sessions where they can write a short statement with their thoughts. They need to start thinking about the future now as a system.

MJ adds that if the legislature thinks that all seven campuses are vital to the regions, the funding model cannot be compared to other states.

Michael Scott asks if there is a target of what size things should be, and Ferrini-Mundy responds that they are working on realistic targets for budgeting. Provost Volin mentions that they have been working on Key Performance Indicators (KPI) for over a year, and they will be presented with projections of 2027 within the next month or two.

The UMaine Machias representative notes that remote and rural campuses support local communities, and that not everyone can come to Orono.

Henri Akono adds that reducing the number of campuses may not necessarily lead to more money.

Amanda Klemmer suggests that the idea of two free years of community college has hurt the campuses and system, and they can work with the legislature to offer two deals of two years at community college or one year in the UMaine system for Maine residents to increase enrollment.

Mike Scott adds that there is a talk of four years of 50% for higher education at a four-year university to get parity with two-year programs.

MJ suggests the need for faculty involvement in campus budget planning, using a framework of working through FIPSE and having town halls for all faculty. Sean suggests hearing the rationale for not accepting ideas put forward to avoid overwhelming tasks for the amount of requests. Kelly Sparks agrees and suggests organizing the ideas and having a formal feedback lesson. Tim Waring points out the challenge of faculty expressing ideas but not seeing the budget after the fact. MJ clarifies that the budget will go through revisionary processes and not just a presentation at the end. Kelly plans to present the first reading of the budget in March and suggests thinking about efficiencies and opportunities on the expense side. The next month will be spent starting the process and framing what big dollars look like.

MJ suggests that when ideas are presented as numbers, it can give the impression that they are already final, and proposes incorporating a narrative to show how the ideas were translated into

the numbers. She feels that this would help the audience to understand how their feedback was incorporated into the final numbers.

Kelly Sparks suggested that they could start evaluating ideas by thinking in terms of incremental dollars or incremental impact. She proposed putting forward a mini business plan with high-level estimates on revenues and expenses to understand the incremental impact on the budget. The investment could have a negative impact in year one but may have a million-dollar positive impact over year two and three. Sparks suggested putting little mini business cases together to evaluate some of their big ideas, and some of those ideas may fall off as they begin to roll them out. The numbers on a piece of paper may sound good, but when they start to implement them, they may not be feasible. This approach can be part of their criteria for evaluating ideas because the impact may be beyond the numbers, such as a positive impact on their research enterprise that they can't quantify financially. We will have to think about other criteria to evaluate ideas beyond just financial considerations.

Alice Bruce raises the question of articulating what the criteria are and how they are prioritized. She assumes there are some priorities about what is preserved.

Kelly Sparks responds, noting that while they had talked about criteria in the past, they hadn't specifically laid out what those criteria were. She feels that UMaine prioritizes public safety, student safety, program quality, and the research enterprise. However, she agreed that it would be helpful to put those criteria down on paper. Kelly also mentioned that she was approaching this from a financial standpoint and that they wouldn't consider something inefficient if it didn't generate more revenue. She promised to give more thought on how they might build the criteria into the process.

Emmanuel Boss brings up a personal example where he had to move a class away from a UMaine supported center due to lack of a cook being available during the summer. That means that money that could be used to support UMaine's infrastructure is going elsewhere because UMaine doesn't have proper infrastructure. He wonders how the structural issues caused by needing something in a limited capacity compared to a year-round capacity will be built into these discussions.

Kelly says she would put a mini business case around that and question whether the incremental revenue associated with specific courses is greater than, from Emmanuel's example, the cost of

hiring a cook on campus for a year. This would involve creating a mini business case around it to assess its feasibility. If the incremental revenues are greater than the cost of hiring a cook, it may be worth considering hiring them. However, it may not be possible to hire a cook on an annual basis. This approach involves an incremental model, which may not be practical to implement for every course, but for larger ideas.

Emily Haddad adds some clarification to Sean Smith's comment from earlier about responses back, and how she was on the committee reviewing those. A challenge they faced was the amount of anonymous responses and that is a lesson that can be learned from.

Provost Volin adds in his experience when going over proposals for different issues, they would set meetings every 2 weeks to go through each proposal and would have an overall list close to the end of the year and that could be a theme of future proposals.

Sean says that he didn't think every proposal would get feedback but that there should be a way to categorize the proposals. Emily Haddad added that the initial budget-building process is happening on a smaller scale and that it's important for people to be aware that there is a preceding step. She explained that the opportunity for input is iterative rather than at a single point in time, and that it shouldn't be seen as only in the process of campus-wide communication.

Michael Scott spoke about the need to do financial assessments on a granular level, taking into account the ripple effects that changes can have on programs. He emphasized the importance of looking at academic impacts when considering financial efficiencies, acknowledging that there are some inefficiencies or non-profits due to the nature of higher education.

Kelly Sparks responded by saying that they've asked deans about the impact of reductions and looked at possible reductions, as well as the impacts of infusions that come directly from academic and administrative leaders for particular functions. She noted that they wouldn't look at individual pieces, but instead focus on broader pieces and cross-organizational efficiencies. She also highlighted the need for leaders of each area to work with their teams to find solutions to become financially sustainable, given that the university is currently operating with deficiencies and isn't in a financially sustainable place.

Henri Akono asks if deans are required to discuss budget requests. Kelly answers that it's not necessarily a requirement to disclose that information but deans are looking for input.

MJ clarifies that in the Senate there's the privilege and opportunity to talk with Kelly directly and comment on broader budget things, but as individual faculty there is a whole other process of moving through people to get granular information about certain programs and how they are affected. Although there may be frustration with the inconsistencies across colleges in how these processes are approached, they are separate from the process being discussed. The theoretical idea of bringing information through FIPSE and holding town halls to discuss broader issues is generally supported, pending any issues that arise. MJ encourages others to share their thoughts and identify any gaps in the proposed process.

VII. Questions of the Administration

All Faculty Senators are invited to address a question to any member of the Administration during this time. Respectful questions on any topic of campus business are welcome.

Eric Landis asks who benefits from infosilem, or more specifically centralized scheduling in general.

Registrar Sam Carrell answers the main beneficiary of infosilem is students. Eric persists, what students? Sam says each department is different, and the overall benefit is to keep scheduling availability as close to plans laid out to make sure courses are scheduled the way they should be. Keeping course offerings set up to maintain students stay on track and so offerings aren't overlapped and stacked and get the full schedule students need.

Emily Haddad adds that for students who are trying to take classes across multiple units, infosilem works better for them compared to if a student schedule exists within an entire unit, that unit can manage it better.

Eric Landis feels in the past it was easier to just make a phone call to find out class availability compared to the centralized versions which seem to always have conflicts.

Alice Bruce says her sense is when working with infosilem, the process of scheduling courses can be complicated and require a lot of added force constraint functionality to avoid conflicts. She notes that they are working hard to make the program function properly, but it can still be

frustrating. Despite the challenges, she acknowledges that the program is working to some extent, but only because of manual human input. Overall, she suggests that there may be a better system for scheduling courses that would be more efficient and effective for everyone involved.

There is a comment online that not all students are engineering majors so infosilem may work for less rigid programs.

Sara Lello expresses a wish for a system that would make it easier for students to find empty rooms for study groups. She describes a student in her class who was frustrated with the difficulty of finding a suitable room. She notes that it can be hard for students to access empty rooms, and they often end up wandering around buildings in search of a suitable space. Sara suggests that having a system in place to help students find available rooms would be helpful. Kathy Slott responds by saying that students would need to contact Space and Scheduling and they can help any student reserve a room.

Alice mentions a system during the COVID pandemic, UMaine collected information on available rooms for students who needed a place to study. This could be a useful approach to address the problem of finding study spaces, but she is unsure of how to get the information to the students. Sara mentions that the students may not know how to access the information provided by the college's records department. She also suggests that finding a way to make the information easily accessible to the students would be key in implementing a system like this.

MJ ends by saying that it looks like there is some process in place for this issue but it just needs to be advertised more clearly. Perhaps using a form like the Memorial Union reservation form.

VIII. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned 4:33 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Kathryn Slott

Prepared by Wyatt Scribner